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TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 1912.

THE TITANIC DISASTER.

Unspeakable horror spread over the world yesterday as it learned of the sinking of the Titanic. The gruesome story pales imagination, and every hour brings more sickening intelligence. At the time of this writing, it is not definitely known how many lives were lost, but there can be little doubt that this was the most fearful disaster in marine history. The largest vessel ever built, the masterpiece of man's constructive genius, freighted with an army of precious human lives, vanished in an instant. "When heaven was all tranquillity" death's dark reef lay straight ahead. The very thought of the scene Sunday night shoots the heart through with horror and stuns the brain. No words can measure the sorrow that has fallen upon thousands of homes; no mind can picture the awful tragedy that snuffed out hundreds of human lives in the twinkling of an eye. The story will be written in blood and tears in the dark record of world disasters.

WILL CHINA'S REPUBLIC ENDURE?

It has been repeatedly asserted that no Occidental can fathom what is behind the Oriental mind, can divine its complex workings, can tell how its mystical attributes may confound all calculations as to its apparently practical directions, can safely assume its real objective, either in purpose or realization. It is the testimony of men who have spent years in India and the farther Orient, in close contact with the natives, that the longer their residence the less competent they have felt to reach clear and intelligent conclusions touching this problem. For these reasons obtains the more or less widespread disposition to challenge Occidental optimism regarding the future of the Chinese republic. But for these reasons also discussion of the question by an educated, enlightened Oriental, who, while knowing the Chinese is not of them, cannot but be recognized not only as most interesting, but as important and authoritative.

Such a discussion we find in the April number of the North American Review, in an article by Adachi Kinnosuke, who was born in an old castle town of Japan, passed through the schools of that place, Kobe and Tokio, and, coming to America, took an eclectic course in Vanderbilt University. Mr. Kinnosuke has been a frequent contributor to leading periodicals printed in this country and Europe, and was the first native of Japan to occupy a prominent position on an American newspaper. His equipment for the task is obvious at once. Owing to heredity and atavism, on the one side, and to his American experience, study and associations, and their broadening influences, on the other, he is in position to approach the question from both the Occidental and the Oriental angle. This he does most comprehensively and logically.

Mr. Kinnosuke is confident that the Chinese republic can and will endure, and in support of his confidence points down to the basic concept that is behind all else in the Chinese mind as it relates to government. That concept is "democracy." From star enough not to be prejudiced, distracted or confused by the miseries of present conflicting and semi-chaotic conditions in China, Mr. Kinnosuke visualizes both the past and the future. He penetrates to the core of things in both directions. Evidencing a most thorough and discriminating knowledge of Chinese history, he goes back to over 2,000 years before Christ, affirms that the Chinese ideal of government was essentially democratic then and is now, and marshals an impressive array of facts and argument to sustain his affirmation. The contention is not new; it has been advanced before, but largely in the form of assumption. It has been discounted by making allowance for the enthusiasm of zealots in the cause of the Chinese revolution who have dogmatized rather than proved. It has never been fortified as it is fortified in the article before us.

The Chinese people, says Mr. Kinnosuke, "have always regarded their rulers as of no greater clay than themselves—the very synthesis of the belief of their neighbors across the Yellow and the Japan Seas, over whom one dynasty, divinely founded, has ruled for more than twenty-five centuries." Bearing in mind the race, nativity and early education and environment of the writer, the tremendous significance of this observation as testifying Mr. Kinnosuke's grasp of his subject must be patent to the most casual reader. "The Chinese," Mr. Kinnosuke further declares, "have enjoyed during centuries the practice of self-government and majority rule, under the very eyes of the worst despots that ever sat enthroned." Why and how? The answer is that in sheer self-defense the people

organized all sorts of secret unions, the most widely known of which among Americans and Europeans are the trade guilds. China is honeycombed with societies and clubs—mystic brotherhoods, we are told—and albeit the object of some of these, as made manifest to the uninformed, are repugnant to every conception of modern civilization and progress, the primal underlying principle of all is majority rule, is popular rule.

In the face of arbitrary, judicial, adverse decree and in contempt of mandarins orders or what not, those societies, clubs or guilds settle finally a variety of questions, such as financial, social, domestic and legal, on the basis of majority rule and the most frequently of justice. "The associations," Mr. Kinnosuke points out, "have been for ages the elementary schools for the people in republican forms of administration. Thus the Chinese have had actual practice in popular administration, rare in the experience of any people." Much of the mysticism and deviousness outsiders associate with the Chinese mind and methods, it is therefore deduced, are more apparent than real, and are designed to cloud the concrete, practical and definite aims towards which the Chinaman works.

In closing Mr. Kinnosuke notes that "we see in brief that the Chinese, who never forgot, have for forty centuries worshipped democratic ideals"; that "no matter how dynasties have flourished and fallen, they have practiced in secret the art of self-government." Then he asks: "Do not the facts we have reviewed promise a long and happy future for the infant Chung Hwa republic?" He thinks they do. He holds that there can be but one logical and natural evolution from this secret and irresponsible piecemeal democratic regnancy to consolidated, responsible and organized self rule. And although we may have never so strongly pre-conceived this idea that China and republicanism are utterly incompatible, as many have, we cannot follow him without conceding that he seems to have made a virtually unassailable case. The very conditions that inspire the doubts of the skeptics and shape the conclusions of the pessimists Mr. Kinnosuke interprets with powerful effect to vindicate the believers and the optimists. Seed that are sown and have been germinating for ages must ultimately bring forth fruit of their own kind.

GOOD ROADS GOING AHEAD.

The good roads movement in Virginia has taken on new life. More road work is being carried on now in this State than ever before. Hundreds of miles of improved highways are in process of construction and the enthusiasm for better roads is at high tide. The newspapers of Virginia are carrying columns upon columns of matter pertaining to the movement, and everywhere public spirited men are aiding and encouraging the good work.

Excellent progress is being made toward the construction of the Richmond to Washington highway, a great thoroughfare that will forge a mighty link in a splendid road chain. A practical plan has been adopted, the execution of which will not only mean the construction of a model highway, but its perpetual maintenance as well. Augusta county on April 30 will vote on a \$1,000,000 bond issue for better roads. The outlook is that the bond issue will be ordered. Stafford votes to-morrow on a \$100,000 bond issue; Stafford has been among the least progressive of the counties in this movement, and the action there is most encouraging. Culpeper county soon votes on a \$120,000 bond issue. Nelson, another backward road county, is about to vote on a bond issue for better highways. The record-breaking road building in Wise and Tazewell goes rapidly on. In other counties sentiment is being aroused and plans being formulated.

There is no better sign of progress than the building of good roads. There is no better indication of the life spirit of the Virginia people, no better evidence of their quickness to seize upon a reform that is both economical and profitable.

RELIGION IN THE UNIVERSITY. No portion of President Alderman's statement upon the condition of the University of Virginia is more interesting than that dealing with the religious life at the institution. The figures he gave furnish an almost startling refutation of the old theory that universities are hotbeds of irreligion and skepticism. Of 866 students reporting, 575 are members of some religious denomination; 221 are affiliated with some religious denomination, and only seven have neither membership nor affiliation. In short, less than 1 per cent of the student body is without some church connection. The average age of these young men is twenty-one years. Yet there seems no lack of breadth of view and variety of belief, since sixteen separate creeds are represented by members. In accordance with Jefferson's ideal all faiths stand upon an equality of opportunity.

It is a good thing for these men to have the standard and guide of religion during a period usually marked by intellectual and emotional storm and stress. No substitute of personal morality or higher ethics, evolutionary or otherwise, can offer the strength or consolation of the ancient creeds based on the deepest cravings of the human soul. The memory that their rituals have been married and buried with it something vital and full of meaning to the soul coming full-fift upon the tumult of modernity.

The religious life at the university is vigorous and active. It is no less encouraging to know that the homes whence these students come are founded on the same divine hope. The church can suffer no grievous injury

while the finest type of manhood in the country remains fast in the old faiths, finding in the pursuit of learning only a wiser and gentler way of making their beliefs into practical service. And any one who has heard sweep out across the lawn, the chant "In the cross of Christ I glory."

Towering o'er the wrecks of time: All the light of sacred story Gathers round its head sublime!"

cannot help but feel that these figures do not mean mere formal profession, but something rising out of the spirit.

OUR PARK VANDALS.

There has been much righteous complaint about the destruction of young trees and shrubbery in the city parks this spring. Children and respectable grown people have joined in this vandalism and have marred the beauty of the parks. Dogwood trees have been torn to pieces, and cedars, honeysuckle vines and other ornamental growths have also been despoiled and damaged. At the Christmas season, the woods are scoured for holly, with the result that the little holly we have left is fast vanishing. Wanton destruction of this kind not only detracts from the attractiveness of the parks, but also is wrong and outrageous.

As a correspondent writes us, "the man or woman flinging these public park adornments could with equal propriety hammer off a section of the bronze statue of Lee as a souvenir to sell." If this destruction supply meant depriving the parks of this year's blooms and flowers, the case might not be so aggravated, but, as a matter of fact, such pillage means that next year there will be no blossoms, and the parks will not be as beautiful as they have been. If we would always enjoy these trees and flowers we must conserve them now. Immediate protection of this community asset of beauty is necessary. The miserable thieves who strip our parks do a great injustice to the people, for such acts make our city fathers think that the people do not appreciate the concessions which are made to their comfort and pleasure. Just as the people who chatter at the top of their voices at the park concerts cause many to feel that the people do not appreciate free music, so the mean few who despoil the parks inspire a belief that the people are ungrateful for the parks.

The parkkeepers and the police ought to get busy and break up this wholesale defacement of public property. The police already have a lot to do, but if the parkkeepers spent a little more time looking after the safety of the property intrusted to them and less to political confabs and logrolling, the necessity for their positions would be more apparent to the people of this city.

PAUSE FOR OUR MUSIC FESTIVAL.

The Newport News Times-Herald has some very complimentary things to say editorially about the Wednesday Club, "one of the State's best educational institutions." It is not simply a musical club, "says the Times-Herald, "it is a school of music. It trains those who sing in the choirs and it trains the popular ear. Year after year it has fed the people on the best of music, both vocal and instrumental, and the people now have a taste for the best and will have no other." Our contemporary discusses the program in full for this season, and correctly says that it will prove a "highlight" to all who attend. The Times-Herald desires that the music lovers of the Peninsula shall take advantage of such a rare opportunity to hear "the world's greatest musicians" at small cost. It is to be hoped that the Peninsula will be well represented at the concerts and that other cities and sections will also send their music lovers here, so that the concerts may become more and more a State institution, increasingly satisfying the musical needs of Virginia.

SPRING.

Thrills, chills, Plasters and pills, Aching and shaking, With manifold ills. Coughing and hacking, Every bone racking, Quaking and shaking, All the nerves quivering, Rheumatic lumping, Teeth all a-jumping, Feels like a blizzard, Down in the gizzard, Feet very friable, Muscles all rigid, Head is a-aching, Ears are a-sizzling, Throat is a-burning, Thorax is a-charring, Cannot help weeping, Tears keep on seeping, Hands feel like leather, Knees knock together, Weak pumping station, No circulation, Please bring, Any old thing, With the exception, Of beautiful spring.

Voice of the People

The "Aldrich" Banking Plan and Its Advocates.

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch: Sir—it is unfortunate that the name of Aldrich has become associated with the proposals of the National Monetary Commission. As a matter of fact the plan of banking reform which the commission last recommended did not originate with ex-Senator Aldrich. As was pointed out by Professor William in his recent address before the Business Men's Club of Richmond and the General Assembly, the proposal for a new, more popularly known as the "Aldrich plan" were originally put forward by Representative Fowler of New Jersey, and instead of being espoused were ridiculed and opposed by Senator Aldrich. It was only after the National Monetary Commission's report had been revised by financial and banking experts that the ideas

first advanced by Mr. Fowler were accepted. Now the popular support of the proposed reform is jeopardized by the desire of ex-Senator Aldrich to receive credit as its originator. The attaching of his name to the plan is the greatest obstacle to its general acceptance. His political record naturally creates suspicion. The banker and business man, as well as all classes of citizens, however, should examine into the merits of the measure. It is a matter of vital importance. Political prejudice, or the suspicion of an untrustworthy public servant should not be permitted to injure the prospects of regulation which in itself may be protective of the general welfare.

The reforms proposed by the National Monetary Commission arise from well-known and generally accepted defects in our present national banking system. The law as it stands today is substantially the same as it was when enacted in 1863 in order to create a uniform currency and to provide a market for the sale of United States bonds.

The commercial and industrial activities of the nation have outgrown the system, and it does not meet the requirements of modern business. It does not provide a currency which automatically expands and contracts according to the needs of trade. Furthermore, it forces the banks for their own protection to pile up millions in idle reserves, which could be used to advantage. In times of panic or bustness stress the system operates to increase this hoarding and to prevent the granting of loans when loans are most needed. The scattered reserves also breed panics, and there is no central agency through which the money reserves of the country can be mobilized in order to promote business stability and to insure the proper development of industry and commerce.

The so-called Aldrich or National Monetary Commission plan contemplates a reform in our present defective banking system, by incorporating a National Reserve Association.

This incorporation will bring the banks of the country into a co-operative union

without destroying or impairing competition or independence.

The idea is not a new or radical one, but an outgrowth of our banking experience.

Political prejudice, or the suspicion of

an untrustworthy public servant should not be permitted to injure the prospects of regulation which in itself may be protective of the general welfare.

The National Reserve Association

would have a capital of not less than \$200,000,000.

It would be owned by the banks of the country, and shares would not be transferable and could not be hypothecated.

There would be no ownership of stock in the association by private persons or corporations.

It would have dealings only with the other banks and the government.

Its business would be conducted through fifteen branches and numerous local associations distributed according to the banking resources and business needs of the country.

The system of control would be representative and democratic, and would be free from the domination of any financial or political interests.

The local associations, composed of individual banks, would be self-governing.

They would elect the directors of the branches, and the directors of the branches in turn would elect the directors of the national association.

The Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of Agriculture, Comptroller of the Currency would be ex-officio directors of the National Reserve Association.

The Governor or chief executive officer

would be selected by the President of the United States from a list of names submitted by the directors.

The governor would be subject to removal

at the will of the President.

The Comptroller of the Currency

would be subject to removal

at the will of the Comptroller of the

Currency.

The Secretary of Agriculture

would be subject to removal

at the will of the Secretary of Agriculture.

The Comptroller of the Currency

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